



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
OF FARMINGTON

Church of the Open Hands

26165 Farmington Road,
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 474-6170
www.farmington-pres.org



December 24, 2023 Worship for Christmas Eve

Meditation For Gathering

Isaiah 9:1-4

-Kwasi I. Kena, The Africana Worship Book

*When voluminous darkness descends and plods the earth
And your eyesight adjusts too comfortably to the dimness of sin
And your soul gropes wildly as if blind to righteousness*

*When putrefied darkness paints your face with moral decay
And people tell you, "you've changed"
And you realize that you can't will yourself into "doing better"*

*When smothering darkness attempts to strangle the twinkle in the stars
And choke any hope in the future
And suffocate the last vestige of breath from your dreams*

*When it appears that the shadowy side of life has triumphed
Remember the words of the prophet Isaiah:*

*"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness – on them light has shined"*

Preparing to Receive the Light

**Please stand in body or spirit*

Prelude

Pat-a-Pan
First Pres. Choral Bells

Susan T. Nelson

Puer nobis nasitur" from Drei Weihnachtsstücke
Derek Lockhart, trumpet

Nicolas Le Bègue

Welcome/Greetings

Pastor Craig

Signing of the Friendship Pad & Prayer Cards

Lighting of the Advent Wreath & Christ Candle

Ron & Nancy Prieskorn

*Hymn # 119

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley

**1 Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king.
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

**2 Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,
late in time behold him come, offspring of the virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate deity,
pleased in flesh with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel. [Refrain]**

**3 Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace! Hail the sun of righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, risen with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth, born to give us second birth. [Refrain]**

Refrain:

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

Call to Worship

Mary Carson

Glory to God in the highest!

And hope to every discouraged heart.

Glory to God in the highest!

And peace to every conflicted soul.

Glory to God in the highest!

And joy to every downcast spirit.

Glory to God in the highest!

And love to everyone.

Let us sing praises to our God.

Let us offer this light against the darkness.

Invocation

**Hymn #133*

O, Come All Ye Faithful

John Francis Wade

**1 O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant; O come ye; O come ye to Bethlehem!
Come, and behold him, born the King of angels!**

**2 True God from true God, Light from light eternal, born of a virgin, a mortal he
comes; very God, begotten, not created! [Refrain]**

**3 Sing, choirs of angels; sing in exultation; sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all glory in the highest! [Refrain]**

**4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this happy morning; Jesus, to thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing! [Refrain]**

Refrain:

**O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him; O come, let us adore him, Christ,
the Lord!**

First Reading: The Prophecy

Isaiah 9: 2, 6 – 7

Hymn # 88

O Come, O Come Emmanuel (V.1-2)

John Weaver

**1 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile
here until the Son of God appear.**

**2 O come, thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily: to us the path
of knowledge show; and teach us in her ways to go. [Refrain]**

The Coming of the Light

Second Reading: The Annunciation to Mary

Luke 1: 26 – 33, 38

1 Still, still, still, he sleeps this night so chill! The virgin's tender arms enfolding, warm and safe the child are holding. Still, still, still, he sleeps this night so chill.

2 Sleep, sleep, sleep, he lies in slumber deep while angel hosts from heaven come winging, sweetest songs of joy are singing. Sleep, sleep, sleep, he lies in slumber deep.

Third Reading: The Birth of Jesus Luke 2: 1 – 7

**1 Infant holy, infant lowly, for his bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing Christ the babe is Lord of all.
Swift are winging angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the babe is Lord of all! Christ the babe is Lord of all!**

**2 Flocks were sleeping; shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of the gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing greet the morrow:
Christ the babe was born for you! Christ the babe was born for you!**

Fourth Reading: The Shepherds Go to the Manger Luke 2: 8 – 16

Anthem *Candlelight Carol* John Rutter
Chancel Choir

Reflection **God Moments** Pastor Craig

Responding to the Light

Christmas Joy Offering Pastor Craig

Tonight's Christmas Joy Offering is designated for several purposes: scholarships for Presbyterian racial/ethnic colleges; supplements to the pension of retired missionaries and pastors who served in low salaried positions; (and this congregation's discretionary fund to assist those in need.)

Offertory

Response # 88 *O Come, O Come Emmanuel (verse 1 and Chorus)* Veni Emmanuel

**1 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.**

Refrain:
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Christmas Prayer of Thanksgiving & The Lord's Prayer Mary Carson

Giving God, as we recount the story of your gift of a Savior on that night long ago, we remember there were some who said, "There's no room", and others who responded, "Come, we'll make room." As we bring our gifts to you tonight, help us give with a heart of abundance and not ones of scarcity! On this holiest of nights, let us dwell with those whose chorus is, "Come, we'll make room...", remembering your abundant love for us. In the name of the child in the manger, who became the Christ who taught us to pray together saying...

"Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen."

The Spreading Of The Light Of Christ

***Christmas Blessing and Candle Lighting**

*Candlelighting Hymn #122 *Silent Night, Holy Night* Joseph Mohr

(Ushers light their candles from the Christ Candle and proceed into the congregation. The candles are lighted with the ushers passing the light near the center aisle and the congregation passing down each row.)

(Following the singing of Silent Night, when all the candles have been lit...)

Leader: Jesus spoke saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."(John 8:12)

(Lights come up slowly in the sanctuary.)

Leader: The People who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

People: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Leader: Those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has a light shined.

People: We have beheld Christ's glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.

Leader: For to us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

People: In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.

Full lights now up in the sanctuary, and the congregation extinguishes their candles.

(Please, return the candle to the ushers as you exit.)

*Song of Welcome and
Celebration of the Light

Hallelujah Chorus

George Fredric Handel

**Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah
Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah**

**For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth
Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah
For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth
Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah
King of kings and Lord of lords
King of kings and Lord of lords
And He shall reign forever and ever
Forever and ever
Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah Hallelujah
Hallelujah**

Source: [LyricFind](#)

Sending Prayer

Carol of Sending #134

Joy to the World, the Lord is Come!

Isaac Watts

**1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her king;
let every heart prepare him room, and heaven and nature sing,
and heaven and nature sing, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.**

**2 Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains repeat the sounding joy, repeat the
sounding joy, repeat, repeat the sounding joy.**

**3 No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground;
he comes to make his blessings flow far as the curse is found,
far as the curse is found, far as, far as the curse is found.**

**4 He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove
the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love,
and wonders of his love, and wonders, wonders of his love.**

Benediction

Pastor Craig

Postlude

Nöel pour l'amour de Marie" from Weihnachtsstücke

Nicolas Le Bègue

This afternoon, let us give a warm welcome to Derek Lockhart.

Shari is honored to say she has worked with Derek a number of times and his musicianship is outstanding. Welcome Derek!

Derek Lockhart enjoys a diverse musical career as a chamber musician, orchestral performer, commercial artist and educator. He has performed in concert with the world-renowned Empire Brass since 2009 and became a member of the celebrated ensemble in 2013. A founding member of the Motor City Brass Quintet, he can also be heard performing with the Grand Rapids Symphony, the Detroit Opera and the Toledo Symphony. During the summer months, Derek plays as a member of the Colorado and Sunflower Music Festival Orchestras.

Worship Liturgist

We welcome Mary Carson as today's liturgist. Manny Sharpe will serve as liturgist on December 31st at 10:00 a.m. For information on serving as a liturgist to assist the pastor during worship, please contact Kari Gorman.



2023 Christmas Poinsettias

Craig & Pam Aue (2) In memory and in honor of loved ones

Leslie Black & Michael Rogers (2) In honor of family near and far

Alvine Cooper In honor of all those who serve in many ways

Randy & Tracy Edwards In honor of loved ones

Ellen & Jeff Ely In memory of Engelina Jansema, Ellen's mother

Anne & Rick Fuller In memory of our niece, Jill Heather

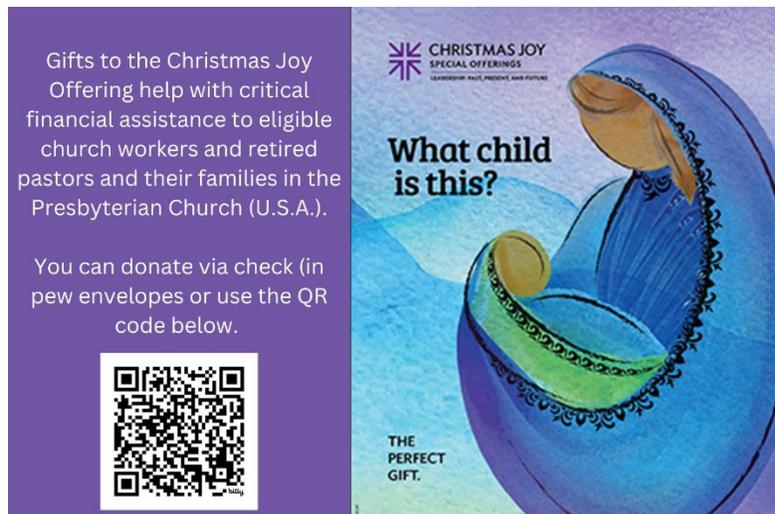
Dale Hawkins In honor of the Hawkins family

Jerry & Marcia Howe In memory of our parents

Mary Kinney (2) In honor of my children Julie, Will/Carol Kinney and grandchildren Andrea and Caitlyn; and in memory of my beloved husband, William L. Kinney

Rob & Sally Kirsten In memory of our parents, Peter & Louise Kirsten and Charles & Mary Shaw

Luna & Dwight Kish (3) In memory of Marilyn and Andrew Kish and Constantine Kapatais
Eddie & Becky Matteson Prayers for Peace on Earth
Don & Sue Schwartz In memory of our mothers, Mary Ellen and Joyce
Sue Smith In memory of Robert and June Lymperis
Jim Tubbs In memory of Lee & Jim Tubbs



Christmas Joy Offering

The Mission Ministry is pleased to sponsor the Christmas Joy Offering every year. There are Christmas Joy envelopes in the pews or you can mail your offering to the church office. Be sure to mark it specifically for Christmas Joy. Christmas Joy offerings go to support retired clergy and leadership development for the future, a very important cause that we heartily support. Thank you for your generosity.

Hospitality Time Schedule

You are invited to bring ONE food item on ONE Sunday each month. Your Sunday depends on the first letter of your last name. It would be greatly appreciated if you are also able to help with set-up or clean-up. Please note healthy options are welcome as well, such as fruit, cheese & crackers, veggies etc. Here's the upcoming schedule:

- December 31: Last names beginning L-K
- January 7: Last names beginning S-Z
- January 14: Last names beginning A-D
- January 21: Last names beginning E-K

Important year-end information regarding contributions

Please be aware that the last bank deposit for contributions for the tax year 2023 will be made on Wednesday, Dec. 27, 2023. This means contributions must be received in the church office by Sunday, December 24, 2023. Any monies received in the mail after these dates will not be counted or deposited until after the end of the year and will be counted as

2024 contributions. Please note these dates so that you will know in advance how to plan your year-end giving.

2024 Worship Flower sign-up available

Please consider giving flowers in memory of a loved one or to recognize a special occasion such as a birthday or anniversary or to the glory of God. **An arrangement is \$25** and enhances our in-person and livestreamed worship services. More than one arrangement may be ordered for any Sunday and will be displayed on plant stands near the pulpit during the service. Your donation will also be acknowledged in that Sunday's worship bulletin. Please sign up on the flower calendar on the kiosk or order through the church office at least one week in advance. You may take home the flowers after the service, ask to have the flowers delivered to you or request to have them delivered to one of our homebound members.



Carol Sing & Holiday Sweater Contest

Please join us December 31st during our regular worship service at 10:00am for a Carol Sing and fun time of fellowship. Don't forget to wear your favorite holiday sweater!

2024 Offering Envelopes

Those who have used numbered envelopes in 2023 will automatically receive envelopes for 2024, unless you inform us otherwise. If you have NOT used envelopes this year, but DO wish to have them for next year, please contact the church office at 248-474-6170 to make your request known. Numbered envelopes facilitate the speed and accuracy of the data entry process for our offering counters, so we do encourage you to use envelopes if you contribute manually on a regular basis. We also encourage the use of electronic debit. If you wish to automatically submit your pledge electronically from your bank account monthly,

please call the church office to have the forms mailed to you. If you have any questions, please call the church office at (248) 474-6170.

Annual Meeting scheduled February 4, 2024; annual reports due- JANUARY 10, 2024

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, February 4, 2024, in Knox Hall and via Zoom following the worship service. Reports to be included in the 2023 Annual Report should be emailed to the church office (info@farmington-pres.org) no later than Wednesday, January 10, 2024. The 2023 Annual Report will be emailed to members who have signed up through the church website to receive the FYI newsletter, the annual report and other important church information via email (to sign up, please go to www.farmington-pres.org). A few printed copies of the 2023 Annual Report will be available at the welcome center on Sunday, January 28, 2024, or you may contact the church office to request a hard copy.

COVID-19 or Flu Symptoms

Please be mindful if you have symptoms, stay home and take care of yourself and others.

Adult Bible Discussion – The Wired Word

Join our Bible discussion **Sundays at 9:00 a.m. in the Library**. Advance copies are available the Saturday before by email. Sunday’s Topic: The Nativity in Art and History. To get on the email list contact Tom Neal at ttneal@sbcglobal.net. Our class is continuing to meet throughout December, please be assured that lessons will be emailed and published on Thursday, December 28, just as they do every Thursday.

News from the Church Office

Office hours are as follows: **Monday, Tuesday & Thursday 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Wednesday: 9 a.m.-2 p.m.** It is a good idea to call ahead if you need to come into the building.

As a reminder please contact the church office via telephone at (248) 474-6170 or email at info@farmington-pres.org. Please note: during the week of 12/25-12/29, the office will be closed. Voicemail will be checked once per day. Regular office hours will resume 1/3/2024.

First Presbyterian Church Staff	
Ministers of the Church	Members of the Congregation
Pastoral Care Parish Associate	The Rev. Craig S. Aue
Minister of Music & Organist/Pianist	Shari Fiore-Bloom
Office Administrative Assistant	Carly Vivio
Office Assistant	Amanda Schreiber
AV Tech Intern	Jaiden Thomas



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